UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/49/466
7 October 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-ninth session
Agenda item 37 (b)

STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES OR REGIONS

Assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. By its resolution 48/197 of 21 December 1993, the General Assembly, inter alia, called upon the international community and intergovernmental organizations to continue to provide Liberia with technical, financial and other assistance for the repatriation and resettlement of Liberian refugees, returnees and displaced persons and for the rehabilitation of combatants.

2. The General Assembly also appealed to the international community to provide adequate assistance to programmes and projects identified in the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to Liberia (A/48/392 and Corr.1), including through contributions to the Trust Fund established to help defray the cost of deployment of additional peace-keeping forces of the Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

3. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to coordinate the work of the United Nations system and to mobilize assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia; to undertake, when conditions permit, in close cooperation with the authorities of Liberia, an overall assessment of needs with the objective of holding, when appropriate, a round-table conference of donors for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia; and to report to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session on the implementation of the resolution.

4. The present report describes the activities carried out in Liberia since the issuance of the previous report of the Secretary-General (A/48/392 and Corr.1) in September 1993. Information on assistance to Liberian refugees in the neighbouring countries will be contained in a separate report to be submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/118 of 20 December 1993.

5. For the 1993/94 period most United Nations efforts have been directed towards supporting the peace process in Liberia, delivering emergency aid to victims of the civil conflict, providing assistance for the resettlement of displaced people and their reintegration into communities, and recommencing sustainable development activities. United Nations agencies as well as national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were all active in the humanitarian effort, with overall coordination provided by the United Nations Resident Coordinator. Priorities included: (a) preparation of a new appeal for humanitarian assistance to cover emergency assistance needs and to support the peace process; (b) strengthening existing programmes and projects to stimulate the local economy through increased agricultural output, food aid monetization, development of a self-supporting drug supply system, public sector policy review, support to national NGOs, and support for small-scale entrepreneurs; and (c) supporting the formulation of an economic rehabilitation strategy and area development scheme to assist the resettlement and reintegration of affected communities.

6. The Cotonou Agreement, signed in Benin on 25 July 1993, 1/ provided for a cease-fire, disarmament and demobilization of the warring factions, formation of a new transitional government, and the holding of general and presidential

elections within seven months. By August 1994 only limited progress had been achieved in any of these areas: fighting among armed factions continued unabated; only 3,500 combatants of an estimated 50,000 had been disarmed; and the transitional government finally seated on 7 March 1994 was unable to extend its authority beyond Monrovia. A six-month delay in providing additional battalions for ECOMOG and fielding the full contingent of military observers of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) was an additional constraint on the peace process.

7. As 7 September 1994, the projected date for elections, drew near, it became clear that the elections would have to be postponed and measures taken to reinvigorate the peace process. To this end a national conference was organized in Monrovia by a coalition of citizens' groups. A parallel meeting of warring factions was convened in Ghana, resulting in the signing of the Akosombo Agreement on 12 September by Mr. Charles Taylor of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), Mr. Alhaji Kromah of the United Liberation Movement for Democracy (ULIMO) and Lt. General Hezekiah Bowen of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). Resistance to the agreement in Monrovia was swift, further complicated by an attempted coup by elements of AFL. The coup attempt was foiled by ECOMOG forces, but an upsurge in fighting in areas outside Monrovia caused a serious deterioration in security and the flight of an estimated 200,000 people from their rural communities, many seeking safe haven in neighbouring countries. The situation is tragically reminiscent of four years ago, when the outbreak of civil war forced half of the population into internal displacement or exile.

8. Even before the events of early September, persistent fighting between the Liberia Peace Council (LPC) and NPFL had resulted in a sharp decline in food production and a virtual halt to the delivery of emergency food, agricultural inputs and medical supplies to the south-eastern counties of Grand Gedeh, Sinoe, Rivercess and Bassa. There had also been increasing incidents of killings of civilians and serious abuses of the population in this area. Only twice in mid-1994 were combined United Nations/NGO missions able to reach Sinoe by boat. The health and nutritional status of the population in and around the port of Greenville, estimated at 35,000, was described as appalling.

9. Needy civilians in the north-western county of Lofa had not received any assistance since December 1993 because of general insecurity and fighting between the Lofa Defence Force (LDF) and ULIMO and the Kromah and Johnson factions of ULIMO. As the latter escalated into a full-scale battle in mid-1994, access to Bomi and Cape Mount counties became impossible except on rare occasions when relief convoys managed to deliver food, medicines and other relief supplies under heavy ECOMOG protection.

10. Because of these developments, the total number of people requiring humanitarian assistance, especially food aid, had increased from 1.5 million in 1993 to 1.8 million in August 1994. Of these, at least 300,000 to 400,000 were inaccessible. More than 700,000 of the target beneficiaries were displaced people, of whom an estimated 200,000 had fled their region of origin over the past six months.

11. As a result of increased food distribution and effective emergency response, the health and nutritional status of the population in accessible

areas, including the displaced, had improved significantly. The rehabilitation of basic services in accessible areas had also gained momentum. The number of functioning health facilities and schools had doubled, a programme to repair and construct water pumps was expanding rapidly and road repair was under way. Timely agricultural inputs such as tools and seeds in accessible parts of the country were expected to contribute to increased harvest yields and household food security of some 60,000 farmers. In short, the flow of humanitarian assistance had expanded and some progress had been made regarding the rehabilitation of Liberia. However, as of September 1994 there is virtually no scope for humanitarian assistance or rehabilitation work outside the Monrovia and Buchanan area because of security concerns. Moreover, nearly all equipment, vehicles and food and medical supplies of relief agencies outside the capital have been stolen by the armed factions.

II. SUPPORT FOR THE PEACE PROCESS

A. Assistance for peace monitoring

12. In addition to providing humanitarian assistance to Liberia since the inception of the crisis, the United Nations has undertaken a series of initiatives to promote a peaceful settlement of the conflict. The Security Council, by its resolution 788 (1992) of 19 November 1992, called upon all parties to cooperate in the peace process initiated by ECOWAS; decided that all States should implement a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Liberia, except those destined for the sole use of ECOMOG; and requested the Secretary-General to dispatch a Special Representative to evaluate the situation.

13. The diplomatic efforts of the Special Representative, Mr. Trevor Gordon-Somers, combined with those of the Eminent Person for Liberia appointed by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), were instrumental in the signing of the Cotonou Agreement in July 1993, under the auspices of the United Nations, OAU and ECOWAS. The collaboration of a United Nations observer mission (UNOMIL) and a regional peace-keeping force (ECOMOG) in promoting implementation of the Agreement was seen as an innovative experiment in peace-keeping. The participation of troops from States members of OAU which are not members of ECOWAS - namely, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda - in ECOMOG added a positive continental dimension.

14. However, as mentioned above, the peace process has encountered serious problems. Continued insecurity and factionalism have impeded the Liberian National Transitional Government from extending its jurisdiction and establishing civil authority throughout the country. Nevertheless, the Transitional Government is striving to develop a focused agenda to unify the country. The creation of a gun-free society is the major preoccupation. The linking of disarmament to economic renewal and revenue generation; restructuring of the management of State-owned corporations; and carrying messages of peace and reconciliation to many parts of the country, particularly Gbarnga, Tubmanburg and Buchanan, are also among the near-term goals of the Transitional Government.

B. Initiatives for rehabilitation, reconstruction and national reconciliation

15. In efforts to circumvent the adverse security situation that prevailed throughout the current year, the United Nations and NGOs pursued a number of innovative measures to support community reintegration and rehabilitation. The overall plan for the reintegration of the displaced population comprised: (a) support for rehabilitation activities in communities which are expected to absorb the internally displaced and demobilized ex-combatants; (b) support for the repatriation and resettlement of Liberian refugees; and (c) assistance with the repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees living in Liberia.

16. Realizing that peace would not be achieved and sustained through disarmament alone, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Food Programme (WFP) helped the Government to embark on a quick-impact income- and job-creation programme aimed primarily at those who had been demobilized but could not return to their communities of origin because of the security situation. The National Volunteer Programme (NVP) provided temporary employment on a food-for-work basis to ex-combatants and displaced people in various sectors such as urban sanitation, infrastructure rehabilitation, road maintenance and land clearing. It was designed to address simultaneously goals of reconciliation and community rehabilitation. In the Monrovia area, NVP was supported by community awareness campaigns, spearheaded by community leaders, stressing the usefulness of the services of the work brigades. Elsewhere in the country the campaign utilized traditional community structures whenever available. Volunteers underwent orientation in dealing with possible negative public responses to their presence in communities.

17. During the pilot stage of the programme, more than 1,000 ex-combatants in Monrovia and another 300 in Margibi County were engaged as national volunteers. The food-for-work activities were supervised by national NGOs such as Special Emergency Life Food (SELF) and Liberians United to Serve Humanity (LUSH) in cooperation with existing community welfare structures. Logistics, tools, food and transportation were provided by WFP. The programme was to be expanded with UNDP funding and WFP/UNOMIL cost-sharing, and linked to other initiatives to employ teachers and health workers and develop micro-enterprises and productive activities, particularly with women. Links were also envisaged with vocational training programmes.

18. Until Liberia regularizes its relations with the major multilateral financial institutions, the United Nations will have the principal responsibility for supporting the Transitional Government in developing sustainable economic strategies and programmes and in resource mobilization. In this domain, the objective of the United Nations is to ensure a continuum between emergency relief, initial community rehabilitation and longer-term reconstruction and sustainable human development, with meaningful participation of NGOs and local communities. To this end, UNDP initiated discussions among the United Nations agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions, the African Development Bank (ADB) and donors on future rehabilitation and reconstruction plans for Liberia. Within this framework, the World Bank arranged an informal meeting of key donors in Paris in March 1994, followed by an assessment mission by its staff in June 1994. UNDP sponsored an informal donors' meeting in

Abidjan in June 1994 with a broad range of participants from Liberia and the international community.

19. UNDP also agreed with the Transitional Government on the formulation of a comprehensive and coherent programme for rehabilitation, reconstruction and reconciliation, including a policy framework. The programme is to be developed with the assistance of a core team of national specialists recruited from all sections of the society. This project, to be undertaken through ADB/UNDP cost-sharing, will be complemented by a parallel programme, funded by the European Union, to conduct studies and assessments related to infrastructural rehabilitation and public sector reforms. The ADB/UNDP project is also to organize a round-table conference at which the Government will present its reconstruction plan and reform package.

20. Participation of interested donor and financial organizations in the preparation of the plan will be actively pursued. The World Bank has already expressed interest in providing assistance for institutional capacity-building in sectors such as fiscal management and data collection. The Bank will also continue consultations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Transitional Government on joint macroeconomic work.

C. Elections

21. Under the Cotonou Agreement, the Elections Commission has responsibility for organizing and administering general and presidential elections. On 15 February 1994, the signatories to the Agreement set 7 September 1994 as the date for elections. That decision was based on the assumption that ECOMOG and UNOMIL would be fully deployed at all ports and entry points throughout Liberia and that disarmament would have been effectively completed, conditions which clearly were not met. The Akosombo Agreement calls for elections in October 1995, a time-frame that coincides with suggestions of the Liberian National Conference.

22. The United Nations has provided support of various kinds for the preparations for elections. In April 1994, the Secretary-General dispatched an international team of advisers to Liberia. The team emphasized the importance of appropriate security arrangements, repatriation of refugees and resettlement of displaced persons, voter registration and boundary demarcation as prerequisites for elections. The advantages of adopting a system of proportional representation in the aftermath of civil conflict were also raised. An advance team of electoral observers was sent to the country, and UNDP provided technical assistance to the Elections Commission.

III. SECTORAL REVIEW OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

A. Food and nutrition

23. During the period under review, the World Food Programme and other agencies, in particular Catholic Relief Services (CRS), responded to the increased emergency food need in all accessible parts of Liberia. Food

commodities provided were rice, oil, beans and corn-soy blend for supplementary feeding to vulnerable groups. More than 60 per cent of the food was provided by WFP; CRS provided 30 per cent; and others, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the remaining 10 per cent.

24. Actual distribution of WFP food and most CRS food was carried out by a number of national and international NGOs at more than 1,500 distribution points. Food commodities were shipped to Monrovia or San Pedro (Côte d'Ivoire). WFP then delivered consignments directly to designated NGOs at regional warehouses. The internal transport, storage and handling costs were met by WFP.

25. Contributing factors to increased food deliveries were greater accessibility of some areas in the south-east and north-east, easier cross-border and cross-line access and movements of people to accessible areas. About 15 per cent of the food was distributed in Monrovia.

26. In 1992 a total of 70,000 metric tons of relief food was distributed in Liberia, of which 75 per cent was delivered in Monrovia. In 1993 distributions doubled between the first half of the year (25,000 metric tons) and the second half (50,000 metric tons), with the increase concentrated mostly outside Monrovia.

27. Some 46,000 metric tons were distributed between January and June 1994, of which only 40 per cent in Monrovia. Distributions in Buchanan and Bong County increased considerably during this period. In April, May and June more than 9,000 metric tons were distributed in Bong, Nimba and Upper Margibi counties. Also in April, a general rice distribution was carried out for the first time in the south-eastern counties of Maryland, southern Grand Gedeh and Grand Kru. Distributions in Lofa, Cape Mount and Bomi counties decreased, then came to a virtual standstill, with special relief convoys dispatched sporadically under ECOMOG protection.

28. In Monrovia general food distribution was reduced from six times per year in 1992 to four times in 1993. Newly displaced persons arriving in the outskirts of Monrovia benefited from emergency distributions. At the same time, institutional support to schools and hospitals including staff rose by more than 100 per cent. As better possibilities of making a living emerged for Monrovia residents, the general population became much less dependent on relief food. WFP therefore foresaw a further reduction in general food distribution to three times a year for 1994.

29. Food assistance for 1994 was targeted at 1.8 million people including 100,000 refugees from Sierra Leone. The standard ration, as recommended by WFP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), remains at 200 grams of rice per person per day except in Monrovia, where it is 100 grams. The recommended ration also includes 60 grams of beans per person per day in the rural areas and 25 grams of oil in urban areas. For vulnerable groups the rations are supplemented with 100 grams of rice (or other staples) and 125 grams of corn-soy blend or beans. The corresponding amount of food required was calculated at 174,215 metric tons, of which 133,150 metric tons were for general distribution. As of June, the total amount pledged or in the

pipeline was nearly 90,000 metric tons. At least another 40,000 metric tons of food commodities were, therefore, still required.

30. Owing to ongoing fighting and the consequent displacement of population, the 1993 harvest and 1994 planting activities have been less than anticipated. Many people in Bassa, Cape Mount and Bomi counties who had already prepared their fields were displaced during the period in which rice should have been planted. Altogether, planting activities have been interrupted or hampered in at least half the country. As a result, WFP estimates a further increase in food assistance needs for 1995 in the Liberia Regional Protracted Operation (covering Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Guinea), more than 80 per cent of whose beneficiaries are Liberians. The overall cost to WFP for 1995 is estimated at US$ 96 million.

31. During the reporting period, malnutrition rates went down dramatically in accessible areas. In Bong and Margibi countries the rate decreased from 40 per cent in October 1993 to 7 per cent in January and 4 per cent to 5 per cent in March 1994. In Lofa, where food distribution started in September 1993, malnutrition rates dropped from 30 per cent to 12 per cent in only three months. In Nimba, however, where food assistance came to a standstill in late 1993, malnutrition rates rose from 9 per cent in November 1993 to nearly 13 per cent in April 1994. As of mid-1994 general food distribution, supplementary feeding programmes and harvesting had contributed to an overall improvement in the nutritional status of the population. The situation was reflected in a decline in the number of children admitted to therapeutic feeding centres, from over 3,000 to around 700, and the closing of half the therapeutic feeding centres operated by Médecins sans frontières (MSF) and Action internationale contre la faim (AICF).

32. By mid-1994 there were 30 supplementary feeding centres, compared to 35-40 in November 1993. This decrease, however, was largely due to the fact that security conditions had hindered the efforts of aid agencies to access many affected areas. For example, all nine centres in Upper and East Lofa had been closed, as well as most in Grand Bassa. The total number of children benefiting from supplementary feeding remained high at 10,000. Newly displaced persons accounted for most of the new admissions. The majority of the feeding centres were still to be found in Bong and Nimba counties, but locations changed according to needs.

33. Apart from insecurity, the main constraints to the delivery of food aid were slow incorporation of new arrivals in the distribution system and interruptions in distribution due to transport or enumeration problems. A fleet of 100 trucks made available by donors helped to alleviate the transport problems.

B. Agriculture

34. The main emphasis of the agricultural programme has been on building food security at the household level. The central activity is the distribution of farm inputs to safeguard the survival of the rural population and support the resettlement of agricultural communities. Failure to provide inputs for the

1994 planting season would not only worsen the domestic food supply situation but further extend dependence on food aid into 1995. To achieve maximum input, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) joined efforts with NGOs to distribute rice and vegetable seeds as well as tools in all accessible farming areas before the end of the planting season. As a rule, this distribution was accompanied by at least one distribution of rice for consumption to ensure that seeds are planted and not eaten.

35. The total requirements for rice in normal circumstances are about 300,000 metric tons per year, of which 50 per cent is produced locally. As of August 1994, the number of farmers who could be reached was estimated at 120,000, including 32,000 in Bomi and Cape Mount at risk of leaving their farms or already on the move. Some 60,000 farmers were displaced, had left the country or lived in inaccessible areas. At best, half of the normal harvest could therefore be expected.

36. The projected shortfall of seed rice among farmers in accessible areas was about 6,000 metric tons. CRS had managed to secure funds for nearly 40 per cent of this amount, and 1,800 metric tons of rice seeds had been imported and distributed. It was expected that another 500 metric tons would arrive in the country for distribution during the current planting season. FAO had purchased 45 metric tons of swamp rice from Sierra Leone, of which 5 metric tons had been distributed in accessible counties.

37. Among the displaced in Bong and Margibi, ICRC distributed 250 metric tons of rice seeds. Africare also planned distribution of some 600 metric tons in Nimba, Cape Mount and Bomi.

38. Vegetable seed requirements per annum are estimated at 15 metric tons. At the beginning of the year, the combined stock of the Lutheran World Service (LWS), CRS and FAO was about 5 metric tons, which has been nearly all distributed. To help fill the vegetable seed gap, FAO had made available funds to purchase 5 metric tons.

39. As many farmers had either lost their tools or been unable to repair or replace them, distribution of cutlasses, hoes, axes and shovels was important for successful cultivation. Funds had been secured by CRS and FAO to provide 70 per cent of the 120,000 accessible farmers with tools. Among the displaced, ICRC had distributed another 25,000 hoes. LWS and UNHCR stocks initially earmarked for returnees were being distributed among 15,000 farmers including spontaneous returnees in Nimba. Stocks of tools were also kept by the Swedish International Relief and Development Agency, Africare and UNHCR to distribute in Lofa and other inaccessible counties if security improved.

40. Livestock programmes, including poultry and pig keeping, were started on a limited scale. Support in the fishing sector has so far been negligible, as most fishing areas remain insecure and in some areas the traditional fishermen have left with their boats.

C. Health and medical care

41. Although in some areas the situation deteriorated, overall efforts to rehabilitate the health sector through mid-1994 were successful. The number of hospitals and clinics functioning has doubled during this period. As of May, 13 hospitals and 101 clinics were providing all normal services such as curative care; mother and child health, including immunization and control of diarrhoeal diseases; and treatment of in-patients. Also, two hospitals and 19 clinics in the inaccessible western part of Liberia continued to provide services. An additional 30 to 40 clinics, some of them mobile, supported by various churches and NGOs, were operating in areas where displaced persons had concentrated. The total number of facilities increased from about 80 to 160 during the period under review. However, less than 25 per cent of these were run by the Ministry of Health and the sector remained highly dependent on the support of international NGOs such as MSF, Save the Children Fund (SCF) and AICF and national NGOs like Medical Emergency Relief Cooperation International (MERCI).

42. From March 1994, when the Liberian National Transitional Government was installed, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) devoted special attention to closer coordination with the Government to facilitate the gradual switching of support from NGOs to government institutions. This process was reflected in the handing over of the Extended Programme of Immunization to the county health team in one county and support through the Ministry of Health to six clinics supervised by the county health team in another county. Training and supervisory support for the opening of government health care facilities increased as well.

43. Meanwhile, increased displacement and subsequent living in overcrowded conditions exacerbated the risk of exposure to epidemic diseases. The most prevalent diseases continued to be malaria (accounting for over 40 per cent of morbidity rates), respiratory infections, diarrhoea, worms and skin infections, all associated with overcrowding or poor sanitary conditions. Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) was also an increasing problem. In 1987, less than 0.1 per cent of tests for the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) were positive. In 1992, 4 per cent of those tested, mainly from Monrovia, were seropositive and surveillance data from July 1993 to date gave a figure hovering near 5 per cent. The National AIDS Control Programme, suggested by WHO, aimed at controlling the spread of HIV and AIDS through public awareness, training of health staff and condom distribution. Progress was being hampered by lack of funds and contributions in kind; as of June 1994, the 1994 stock consisting of 500,000 condoms was nearly depleted without any new contributions pledged. Demand was increasing rapidly and WHO estimated that at least 1.5 million extra condoms were needed.

44. Malnutrition and measles decreased, although both continued to contribute to a high mortality. In 1993, the childhood mortality rate in Liberia was 190/1,000, with measles, meningitis, diarrhoea, malnutrition and neonatal tetanus as leading causes of death among children.

45. A start was made with the integration of emergency relief projects into a consolidated primary health care system. Special attention was given to vaccination of young children. Coverage surveys showed that the efforts

produced some results. In Monrovia, 84 per cent of the children were found to be vaccinated against tuberculosis and around 45 per cent against the other childhood diseases such as measles and polio. Also, 35 per cent of the mothers, and through them 33 per cent of the children, had been protected against neonatal tetanus through immunization. In neighbouring countries in West Africa the coverage rates range from 40 per cent to 60 per cent. The 1993 goal set by UNICEF to immunize nearly 60,000 children contributed to the increased coverage.

46. In Nimba, only 12 per cent of the children were vaccinated against measles, while 56 per cent had received no vaccinations at all in November 1993. By March 1994, after an intensive immunization campaign by MSF, 48 per cent of the children were protected against measles and only 28 per cent had not received any immunization. In Bong and Margibi the measles coverage in February was also low, with 19 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively. New campaigns were launched to increase these rates.

47. Another activity on which primary health care increasingly focused was the prevention and treatment of diarrhoeal diseases. In 1993, nearly 20 per cent of the children under five years attended a clinic because of diarrhoea, but in only 25 per cent of the cases was oral rehydration therapy prescribed. Of rural caretakers, 50 per cent did not know the cause (or treatment) of diarrhoea nor how to prevent it.

48. United Nations agencies, the Ministry of Health and NGOs will continue to integrate emergency projects with primary health care, with the Ministry eventually assuming full responsibility.

D. Water and sanitation

49. The provision of safe drinking water and improvement of general sanitation have been among the more critical needs addressed by United Nations agencies and NGOs in Liberia. Even before the war, the water situation was precarious as only 45 per cent of the urban and 23 per cent of the rural population had access to safe drinking water, that is, an estimated 750,000 out of 2.2 million people. Although at present less than 50 per cent of the pre-war supply system is intact, the number of people having access has not gone down dramatically. In Monrovia, the rehabilitated water plant allows for a supply of 2.4 million gallons per day which, together with the emergency shallow and deep-wells programme launched by ICRC, MSF-Belgium and UNICEF, provides water for the displaced in shelters and the local population estimated at 800,000 people. Average monthly distribution is 60 million gallons. The quality is tested regularly and wells are chlorinated when necessary. Despite these efforts, there is not enough safe water, and diarrhoeal diseases due to the use of polluted water are an ongoing problem.

50. In Buchanan, AICF constructed during the first months of 1994 water wells which provide water for 70,000 people. In the rural areas substantial intervention started only recently. In the south-east, AICF was constructing or rehabilitating some 250 wells, while in Bong and Margibi 300 wells are under construction or repair by MSF with support from UNICEF. Also in Bong and Margibi, two national NGOs were implementing a UNICEF wells rehabilitation

project. UNICEF and NGOs were aiming at a further increase in the water supply in the rural areas and shelters for displaced persons.

51. Before the war a sewerage system existed only in Monrovia, serving about 35 per cent of the population. The breakdown of this system has created further dependency on facilities such as septic tanks, latrines, beaches, rivers and bushes. This, in combination with poor knowledge of the cause and prevention of diarrhoeal disease, has contributed to a major outbreak of diarrhoea in Monrovia during the reporting period. An environmental sanitation project (solid waste disposal and partial and alternative means of operation for the sewerage system) including health education was launched as an emergency response.

52. For the rural population very little has changed, as only 0.5 per cent of the population had access to properly constructed sanitation facilities in the first place. Pit latrines are normally installed in shelters for the displaced, but the pace of construction is inadequate to keep up with rapidly increasing needs.

53. Additional funding to implement urban sanitation projects emphasizing health education and promotion of on-site disposal systems, as well as rural projects of latrines construction, has been only partly secured by UNICEF and NGOs.

E. Education and training

54. Whereas in 1993 schools were reopening only in Monrovia and classrooms remained empty in other parts of the country, education more recently became available in many counties. UNICEF together with international NGOs, in particular the Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA) and national NGOs, specifically the Church Related Educational Development Organization (CREDO), continued to encourage the opening of schools by providing supplies and training for teachers. In some places, a revolving fund for school supplies and equipment was established as well. Other support activities include refresher courses for teachers, the printing of educational materials and the provision of trauma counselling in schools. This, however, covered only part of the needs and more funding was necessary for physical rehabilitation and books.

55. Most students benefited from the emergency school feeding service, while teachers and support staff received food for work. The food was provided by WFP and distributed by ADRA in Bassa, Monserrado, Margibi and Lower Bong and by LWS in western Liberia, Upper Bong and Nimba.

56. As of mid-year there were about 750 schools functioning in Monrovia and environs, Margibi and Bassa. The total number of pupils enrolled in these schools was 200,000. The number of teachers and support staff was about 18,000. In Nimba and Bong some 150 schools had reopened since April, with around 25,000 students and 1,000 teachers and other staff. In the south-east, 90 schools were functioning. Another 700 schools were preparing to open in the next school season, with 200,000 pupils and 15,000 support staff. However, nearly 250 schools which had previously been functioning in Lofa, Bomi and Cape Mount were

temporarily closed, affecting some 30,000 students and 2,500 teachers and support staff.

57. In the absence of transport, equipment and qualified teaching staff, institutions of higher education function under difficult circumstances. Nevertheless, for the first time, several students graduated from the University of Liberia. Also students continued to be graduated from mid-level technical and medical institutions.

58. As a result of the slow pace of demobilization, vocational training foreseen as an integral part of the community reintegration and rehabilitation programme could not be provided. However, UNDP and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) assisted the Ministry of Education in establishing a short-term strategy to develop the education sector as a prime mover in the peace process. This strategy was reflected in a multi-donor funded programme for basic education (primary and technical).

F. Specific target groups

1. Refugees

59. Prior to the increase in fighting and the attempted coup in the second week of September 1994, some refugees had returned spontaneously to Liberia. UNHCR estimates that 75,000 returned last year and some 25,000 in 1994. However, the lack of progress on disarmament and the deterioration in security conditions had prevented the anticipated repatriation of over 550,000 Liberian refugees, of whom 150,000 were expected to return spontaneously.

60. During the past few months, 500 returnees per week were registered in the western county of Nimba. Refugees had also been arriving at the port of Monrovia at a rate of about 50 per week. Spontaneous repatriation into Monrovia was facilitated by UNHCR, which contacted relatives abroad on request and assisted those wishing to return. The implementing partners of UNHCR - LUSH, SELF and LWS - assisted with transport and the provision of food and domestic items to returnees.

61. The serious deterioration in security in September 1994, marked by civilian deaths, widespread militia looting and destruction of property, resulted in massive new outflows of refugees into Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea. There were also reports of new refugee flows into Sierra Leone. In some cases, the entire population of a town either became internally displaced or sought safe haven in a neighbouring country.

62. Meanwhile, most of the estimated 100,000 refugees from Sierra Leone residing in Liberia have not received humanitarian assistance since December 1993, when insecurity forced UNHCR and other relief agencies out of the western counties of Lofa and Cape Mount. However, more than 5,000 refugees who succeeded in leaving those counties were re-registered in more accessible areas, where they received special attention from UNHCR. These persons are threatened once again by recent events.

2. Displaced persons

63. The recent upsurge in factional fighting has precipitated the flight of over 100,000 people from their mainly rural homes. The majority of this population are women, children and the elderly. This new movement of displaced persons is particularly tragic given the cessation of all humanitarian activities in rural Liberia with the exception of Buchanan, where 45,000 people are being assisted by national staff of international NGOs.

64. As most displaced persons flee with very few personal belongings, the need for relief materials such as food, clothes, blankets and cooking utensils is particularly acute. Humanitarian assistance is provided to this population by a number of United Nations agencies including UNDP, UNICEF and WFP, as well as many local and international NGOs and churches. UNHCR also provides relief to the displaced as part of an integrated programme, drawing on stocks held in anticipation of repatriation. For temporary accommodation, shelters are usually made by the displaced themselves from local materials, soon after arrival. Major donors of plastic sheeting to protect the huts from the rain are the Save the Children Fund, UNHCR and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), while UNDP has helped with tools and transport of materials. Site preparation and assistance with construction are also being provided by AICF and MSF-Belgium.

65. As long as the movement of people to safer places continues, assistance needs will continue to grow and to challenge the responsive capacity of relief agencies. The United Nations has therefore appealed to donors to continue to respond positively and promptly to requests for resources to meet the urgent needs of newly displaced persons.

3. Children in difficult circumstances

66. Most of the assistance to children in difficult circumstances has been provided through a collaborative effort of several national and international NGOs together with UNICEF. Orphaned, abandoned or displaced children who have been cut off from their parents are catered for in orphanages. SCF and UNICEF are particularly active in a tracing and reunification programme as well as in finding durable solutions through foster care. The Children's Assistance Programme (CAP), a Liberian NGO, is providing an increasing number of orphanages with staff.

67. CAP also has been given the responsibility of managing programmes for child ex-combatants with help from MSF-Belgium, SCF and UNICEF. An estimated 6,000 children will eventually benefit from assistance in reintegrating into civilian life. Special counselling, health care and education are part of the programme. Three centres have been established to date, caring for some 200 children.

68. Other assistance to children includes an agricultural vocational training programme in Monrovia for about 500 street children funded by UNICEF; a war trauma counsellors' training programme with special workshops for schools; and support to an orthopaedic workshop for physically disabled children.

4. The elderly

69. Vast displacement has resulted in a general breakdown of the extended family system. As a consequence, besides unaccompanied minors, many older people arrive in shelter sites without any family. Many are sick and often malnourished. Since the middle of 1993, a local NGO, Special Emergency Relief for the Elderly (SERE), has focused on the plight of these isolated elderly, establishing seven centres in Monrovia, Buchanan and Margibi for over 1,000 elderly displaced persons. With assistance from NGOs and UNDP, SERE makes special provisions to meet the food, health and other needs of the elderly. Income-generating projects have been started as well. A government request to extend the programme to other shelters could not be honoured because of funding gaps.

5. Abused women and girls

70. Over the years, thousands of women and girls have been subjected to sexual violence and other forms of abuse. Reports indicate that all factions frequently rape and attack women. Often women are abducted and held as sexual slaves. Assistance for this group began one year ago in Monrovia and was recently extended to Buchanan. With funding from UNICEF, the National Women's Council of Liberia implements the programme, which consists of counselling, medical services and training in income-generating activities. A female lawyer also provides legal services on an ad hoc basis. In Monrovia more than 1,000 women were assisted during the first year. In Buchanan more than 100 abused women sought counselling during a six-week pilot project. The aim is to extend the programme further, starting in Gbarnga, when conditions permit.

IV. ASSISTANCE BY MEMBER STATES AND OTHER DONORS

71. The humanitarian effort in Liberia has relied on contributions from the international community - both bilateral and multilateral - in response to several special and general appeals issued by the Secretary-General since 1990. Contributions for the period from November 1990 to October 1993 amounted to US$ 147 million.

72. In November 1993, the Secretary-General issued a further inter-agency appeal seeking US$ 284 million in assistance for the period through December 1994. This appeal was envisaged to cover a period of transition from civil strife to democratic governance, thus providing a link between humanitarian relief, short-term rehabilitation activities and a medium to longer-term rehabilitation and reconstruction programme. The amount requested was subsequently revised downward to US$ 170.4 million to reflect developments in the country, particularly the inability to carry out an organized mass repatriation of Liberian refugees. As can be seen from the annex to the present report, contributions of US$ 80.3 million had been reported as of 15 September 1994. In addition, US$ 19 million is known to have been contributed for humanitarian assistance to Liberia outside the framework of the appeal, either bilaterally through NGOs, or through United Nations agencies.

73. Responses to the 1993-1994 appeal vary widely from sector to sector. Nearly three quarters of the required food commodities had been pledged by September 1994. On the other hand, few contributions were made to programmes relevant to the resettlement and reintegration of communities, such as WHO health and medical care programmes, the International Labour Organization (ILO) programme for vocational training and the requirements of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for emergency and medium-term shelter.

74. By its resolution 48/197 of 21 December 1993, the General Assembly called upon the international community to contribute to the United Nations Trust Fund established, inter alia, to help defray the cost of the deployment of additional ECOMOG peace-keeping forces. The response to date has been disappointing. The United States Government is the only significant contributor with a commitment of US$ 19 million to the Fund. Other contributions have been received from the United Kingdom (US$ 1 million for mine clearance, health and humanitarian relief activities), Denmark (US$ 295,000) and Germany (20 trucks). Japan, the Netherlands and Sweden have expressed interest but not yet contributed.

75. On 31 March 1994, the Secretary-General invited Member States and other donors to provide information on assistance extended to Liberia in the framework of General Assembly resolution 48/197. Replies were received from the following States:

(a) Finland. Finnish humanitarian aid for Liberia for 1993 was Fmk 1 million through UNICEF and Fmk 1.5 million through ICRC. For 1994 the amount is Fmk 1.5 million through UNICEF.

(b) Japan. The Government of Japan has provided the following assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia: (i) US$ 3.4 million for refugees through UNHCR; (ii) US$ 5.69 million for the provision of food for refugees through WFP; and (iii) US$ 1.64 million for the provision of food for displaced persons through WFP.

(c) Norway. A total of NKr 3,987,951 has been donated, including NKr 1,487,951 through Médecins sans frontières for emergency assistance to refugees from Liberia in Guinea, and NKr 2,370,600 through UNICEF for emergency assistance programmes.

(d) Switzerland. Swiss assistance to Liberia in 1993 amounted to SwF 279,641 through ICRC and WFP. In the first quarter of 1994, SwF 656,000 was contributed through UNICEF and the Salvation Army.

(e) United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. During the period from 1 April 1993 to 31 March 1994, the United Kingdom spent £1.63 million on humanitarian aid to Liberia through United Nations agencies, the International Red Cross movement and the Save the Children Fund. This figure includes the US$ 7 million contributed to the United Nations Trust Fund for Liberia which, inter alia, is being spent on rehabilitation of former combatants and public information activities.

V. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

76. The signing of the Cotonou Agreement raised hopes that Liberia could embark definitively on the transition from a war-torn society to a peaceful and democratic State during the period covered by the present report. The efforts of the United Nations system, both through its humanitarian agencies and UNOMIL, were geared towards supporting the people of Liberia in that arduous process.

77. The aspirations expressed through the Cotonou Agreement proved elusive as the disarmament process stalled, new armed factions emerged and fighting intensified, particularly after mid-year 1994. Consequently, emergency relief for the displaced and other vulnerable groups assumed greater importance than initially expected in relation to resettlement, rehabilitation and reconstruction activities. Moreover, increasing security problems seriously hindered the work of humanitarian agencies, so that even the most immediate needs of large numbers of Liberians could not be addressed.

78. Even within these very constraining circumstances, some real and encouraging successes were achieved thanks to the untiring and courageous efforts of the humanitarian agencies. Hundreds of thousands of Liberians received life-sustaining food, medical care and other assistance. The National Volunteer Programme simultaneously addressed the need for short-term employment of demobilized combatants, rehabilitation of war-affected communities, and national reconciliation. Agricultural assistance helped to sustain local production of foodstuffs in some areas, and great strides were made in reopening schools, which are crucial to the intellectual and social development of Liberia's youth.

79. It can only be hoped that political developments will soon allow for rapid reactivation of plans for resettlement of the displaced and demobilized, rehabilitation of war-torn communities and revitalization of Liberia's shattered economy. Liberians have suffered enough from a cruel, senseless and seemingly interminable cycle of war and destruction.

Notes

1/ S/26272, annex.

ANNEX

Contributions to the United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Humanitarian Assistance to Liberia, November 1993-December 1994

Appealing agency	Requirements (US$)	Contribution (US$)	Shortfall (US$)	Needs covered (percentage)
UNICEF	17 000 000	4 728 384	12 271 616	27.8
UNDP	2 908 380	3 316 719	(408 339)	114.0
UNV	3 160 952	0	3 160 952	0.0
WFP (non-food)	3 641 724	2 168 889	1 472 835	59.6
WFP (food)	92 355 005	67 042 951	25 312 054	72.6
Habitat	3 500 000	0	3 500 000	0.0
UNHCR	10 000 000	2 326 721	7 673 279	23.3
ILO	2 500 000	0	2 500 000	0.0
FAO	14 698 942	672 443	14 026 499	4.6
WHO	17 807 100	0	17 807 100	0.0
UNSCOL a/	2 863 076	0	2 863 076	0.0
TOTAL	170 435 179	80 256 107	90 179 072	47.1

Source: Compiled by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs on the basis of information provided by the respective appealing agencies.

a/ United Nations Special Coordinator for Emergency Relief Operations in Liberia.